



Cab.25.3.2015/7.2

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (BMBC)

This matter is not a Key Decision within the council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan.

**Report of the Director of Human Resources,
Performance and Communications.**

SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT ON THE 'HEALTH TRAINER SERVICE'

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet the findings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) from the investigation undertaken on its behalf by the 'Health Trainer Service' Task & Finish Group (TFG) regarding the performance of the Health Trainer Service.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet considers the conclusions and recommendations set out in paragraph 5 as a result of its investigation into the performance of the Health Trainer Service.**

3. Background

- 3.1 This TFG was established as a result of considering the 2013-14 Quarter 4 Corporate Plan Performance Report which highlighted concerns regarding the large fluctuations in Health Trainer Service performance being recorded.
- 3.2 The Barnsley Health Trainer Service is a free, confidential one-to-one service that helps support local people and their families to make small, sustainable healthy lifestyle changes. The service supports people to eat healthier, maintain a healthy weight, increase physical activity, stop smoking and supports those with low level mental health issues including depression, anxiety and low mood. The service also signposts to other agencies and groups that can support people on a range of issues including debt, housing and welfare etc.
- 3.3 As outlined within the Council's Corporate Plan under 'citizens achieving their potential', the Council works to 'make the improvement of people's health and wellbeing everybody's business, with an emphasis on prevention and the contribution that all services can make'. Also, it works to 'prioritise the reduction of health inequalities between different parts of the borough and the borough and the rest of the country'. Therefore, the work of the Health Trainer Service is key in contributing to achieving these outcomes.

- 3.4 The members of this TFG included:
Councillor Ralph Sixsmith (TFG Lead Member), Councillor Sharon Brook, Councillor Alice Cave, Councillor John Clarke, Councillor Robert Frost, Councillor Caroline Makinson, Councillor Margaret Sheard and Co-opted Member Joan Whitaker.

4. What the Task & Finish Group looked at and found

- 4.1 An initial meeting was held with the TFG Lead Member, Scrutiny Officer and Health Trainer Service Commissioner in order to scope the investigation. It became apparent that due to the cycle of behaviour change and the way data was reported, this resulted in large fluctuations in performance being reported in the corporate performance report even though year on year the targets set had been over-achieved by the Health Trainer Service.
- 4.2 As a result of this, the indicator in the corporate performance report was amended to better reflect the performance of the Health Trainer Service and narrative was provided to explain this indicator. The Health Trainer Service Commissioner advised that an improvement plan was in place for the Health Trainer Service to ensure targets were being met in accordance with the contract. Since this has been in place, performance figures have risen and the Health Trainer Service continues to work hard to make improvements.
- 4.3 The TFG recognises the importance of this service and its impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities, particularly as the service holds performance information in relation to a number of smaller goals which are made by individuals, for example to reduce their alcohol intake, increase their intake of fruit and vegetables etc. This information feeds into wider performance in terms of improving health in the Borough therefore the TFG agreed to consider the performance of the service in detail.
- 4.4 The data showed that most of the Health Trainer Service's work supports clients to make healthy lifestyle changes in diet and exercise. The other main areas of support are weight management, smoking, education and training (including the development of healthy cooking skills). This highlights the service is focusing on the main lifestyle choices that have a direct effect on quality of life, health and wellbeing and life expectancy. It is also noted that, in 2013/14, over 2000 referrals were made into the service, 61% of which were from the most disadvantaged areas of the Borough.
- 4.5 It was highlighted that in order for the service to be effective, it needs to maximise on its referrals so that it has the opportunity to work with community members. Some of the barriers to the service working effectively are limited access to being involved in schools as well as being unable to be present in some GP surgeries.
- 4.6 During the course of the investigation it became apparent that it would be helpful for all Members to be better aware of the Health Trainer Service and its presence in their community, therefore an all-member information brief (AMIB) was held. The session was delivered by the Health Trainer Service Manager and the Health Trainer Service Commissioner and provided more information to attendees regarding available services as well as how Members could help refer people to the service.

- 4.7 Some Members attending the session expressed an interest in having a follow-up meeting with the Health Trainer Service Manager to discuss local issues and how the service could be better delivered within particular areas. As a follow-up to this, an email was sent on behalf of the TFG to all Members to encourage them to contact the Health Trainer Service Manger directly. Since the publication of this information, the Health Trainer Service Manager has advised that they have been in contact with a number of Members which has positively impacted on the delivery of the service.
- 4.8 As part of considering the performance of the service, Members felt it was important to meet with service users and find out about their experiences of using the Health Trainer Service. Therefore, the TFG met with some services users who had taken part in different elements of the Health Trainer Service.
- 4.9 The service users praised the Health Trainer Service and advised of the positive impact it had had upon both their mental and physical wellbeing. They advised that the workers were very knowledgeable regarding local services and were able to sign-post them to other support services. One service user highlighted how peer-support in particular had been of help to them as part of the service they accessed.
- 4.10 As highlighted in BMBC's 'Be Well Barnsley' Cabinet report from March 2014 (Cab.12.3.2014/11), the TFG are aware that the current three separate contracts for lifestyle services (Stop Smoking Service, Weight Management Service and Health Trainer Service) will be commissioned as an integrated lifestyle service. The new service is due to be launched in November 2015 with a reduced contract value from £1.7million to up to £1 million. The Cabinet report notes that currently Barnsley residents and referrers often find it difficult to access the right service. Also, individuals can be users of more than one of these services, resulting in the same information being given and recorded multiple times. Therefore it is hoped that these issues will be resolved as part of the newly commissioned service.

5. **Recommendations**

- 5.1 As a result of the investigation into the Health Trainer Service, amendments have been made to corporate performance reporting which better reflects the performance of the service. Also, an AMIB has been held to increase the knowledge and understanding of the Health Trainer Service amongst Members so they can share this for the benefit of their constituents. In addition to these actions, the TFG recommends the following:
- 5.2 **Recommendation 1: We recommend that all Councillors engage with the Health Trainer Service and the new 'Be Well Barnsley' Service once it is commissioned to ensure that they provide local knowledge with how best to target services in their local area**
By Members sharing their knowledge of the local area, they can assist with where services can be best-placed to target members of the community. Also, by being aware of local services, they are able to share this information with their constituents.
- 5.3 **Recommendation 2: We recommend that work is done with partners to ensure that all schools and GP practices engage with local healthy lifestyle services to maximise the number of community members accessing services**

It is noted that improving the health and wellbeing of our communities is everybody's business and therefore access to community members needs to be maximised. Members and those on school governing bodies should encourage schools to engage with healthy lifestyle services. Similarly through the Health and Wellbeing Board, local partnership agencies should be encouraged to engage with healthy lifestyle services and promote them amongst their own staff and service users.

5.4 **Recommendation 3: We recommend that in commissioning the new integrated 'Be Well Barnsley' Service that a social value element is included in the service specification to maximise the income in the Barnsley economy as well as preserving the knowledge of local services which has been built up by the current workforce**

Maximising income in the Barnsley economy is of benefit to the whole Borough. Also, the service users were particularly helped by the local knowledge of the Health Trainer Service staff.

5.5 **Recommendation 4: We recommend that data is gathered and utilised to understand where there are hard to reach groups who are less likely to access health and wellbeing services and how work can be done to engage with these communities**

For example, figures should be broken down by race, gender, ethnicity, disability etc. to understand hard to reach groups and target interventions accordingly. If these groups are not identified and engaged we will not be able to make a fundamental difference to the health and wellbeing of the total Barnsley population.

The TFG would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who provided information and assisted with the TFG's investigation.

6. **Implications for local people / service users**

- 6.1 By carrying out the recommendations in the report and encouraging our communities to have healthy lifestyles, this will help reduce preventable deaths in Barnsley and enable people in our communities to have longer and healthier lives.

7. **Financial implications**

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications, although in responding to the report, several recommendations would have financial implications which would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or partnership agencies.

8. **Employee implications**

- 8.1 There are no specific employee implications, although in responding to the report, several recommendations would have employee implications which would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or partnership agencies.

9. Communications implications

- 9.1 It is important that local healthy lifestyle services are promoted to Barnsley communities. When the new 'Be Well Barnsley' Service is commissioned, consideration needs to be given in the contract as to how the changes are communicated both to our communities, Members and service providers who refer into them.

10. Consultations

- 10.1 Consultations have taken place with Councillors Sixsmith (TFG Lead Member), Brook, Cave, Clarke, Ennis (OSC Chair), Frost, Makinson, M. Sheard, Co-opted Member Ms Joan Whittaker, Council Officers Julia Burrows, Julia Bell and Rachel King.

11. Community Strategy and the Council's Performance Management Framework

- 11.1 As part of the Council's priority to have 'citizens achieving their potential', the Council works to 'make the improvement of people's health and wellbeing everybody's business, with an emphasis on prevention and the contribution that all services can make'. Encouraging and enabling people to live healthy lifestyles is key to preventing ill health amongst the population. Therefore enabling access to and encouraging uptake of these services by our communities is vital.

12. Tackling health inequalities

- 12.1 Ensuring that healthy lifestyle services are available to all the Barnsley population is crucial in helping to tackle health inequalities. In particular, these services need to be taken to those most in need and hard to reach groups. These particular groups need to be identified and work targeted to encourage their engagement with healthy lifestyle services.

13. Risk management issues

- 13.1 This issue directly relates to the following risks, currently logged on the Council's Strategic Risk Register (SRR):
- 'Failure to achieve a reduction in Health inequalities within the Borough' (Risk 3026); and,
 - 'Failure to protect the health of the population from preventable health threats' (Risk 3047).
- 13.2 The recommendations detailed in section 5.1 – 5.5 should be considered by the Director of Public Health in light of the next review of the SRR, which is due to be completed and reported to Cabinet in September / October 2015.
- 13.3 It is likely the recommended activities detailed in this report will contribute further to the effective mitigation of these risks, and it would be appropriate for any follow-up report regarding lifestyle services in Barnsley to be cognisant of these risks.

14. Promoting equality & diversity and social inclusion

14.1 The TFG looked at the impact of this issue on all of Barnsley’s communities. It is important that all relevant populations are encouraged to access health and wellbeing services and work is done to specifically target the most vulnerable as highlighted in the recommendations.

15. Glossary

15.1 AMIB – All Member Information Brief
BMBC – Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
OSC – Overview and Scrutiny
TFG – Task and Finish Group

16. Background papers

16.1 Be Well Barnsley – An Integrated Wellness Services Cabinet Report
(Cab.12.3.2014/11)

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Financial Implications /

Consultation

(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer where no financial implications)